SAKU-
RA
IS
STRONG.
Scène.031 Purpose

THAT'S WHY I RAISED HER THAT WAY.

I THOUGHT I'D BET EVERY-THING ON HER.

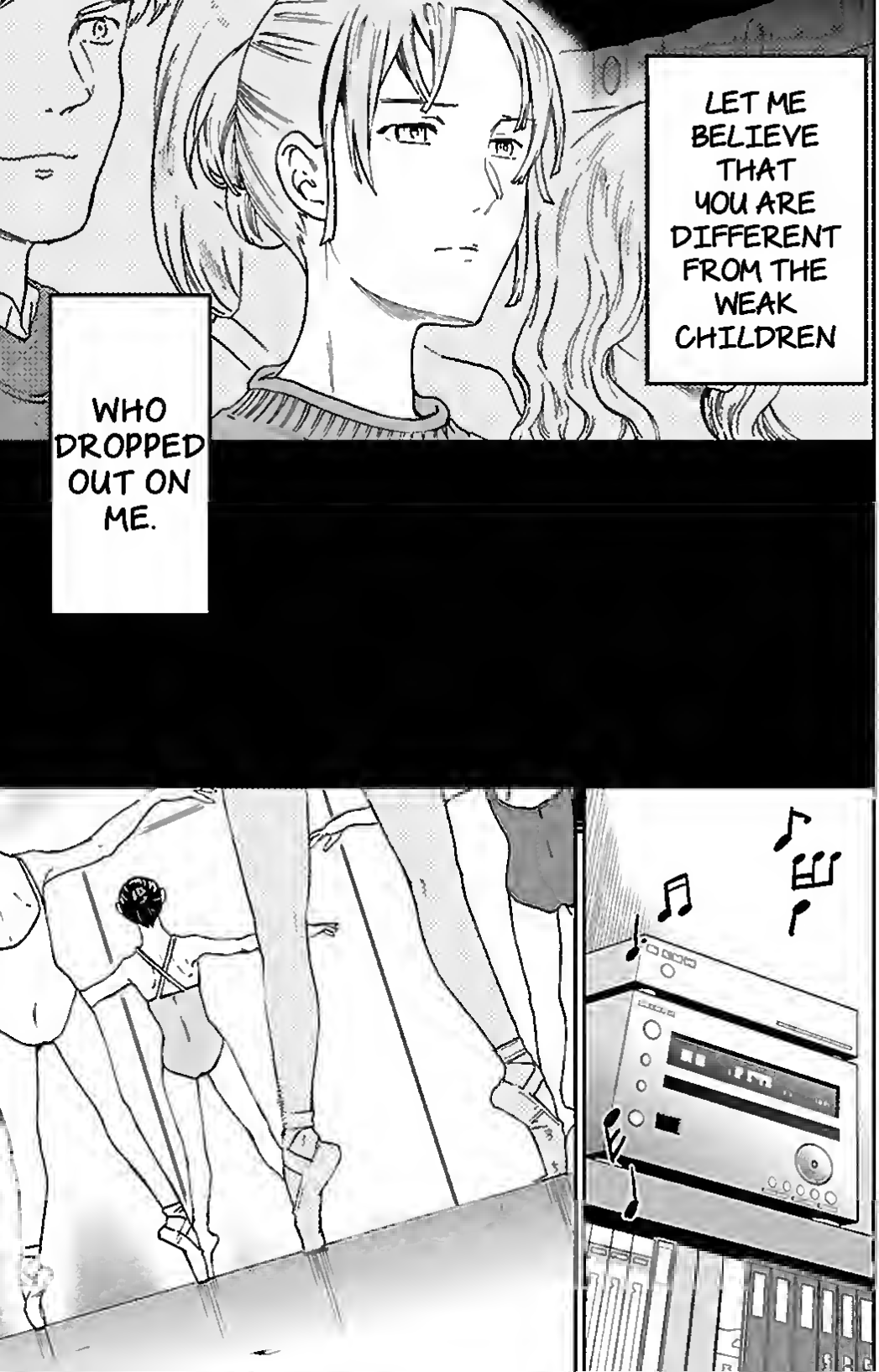
TO BRING HER TO THE TOP.
I'D INVEST EVERY-THING I HAD LEARNED INTO THIS CHILD,
DESPITE OUR DIF-FERENT CULTURE AND SKIN COLOUR.
I WON'T LET ANYONE BE ABLE TO CRITI-SIZE HER
WHEREVER SHE WERE TO SET FOOT!
SHE WOULD BE A RESPECTED BALLERINA

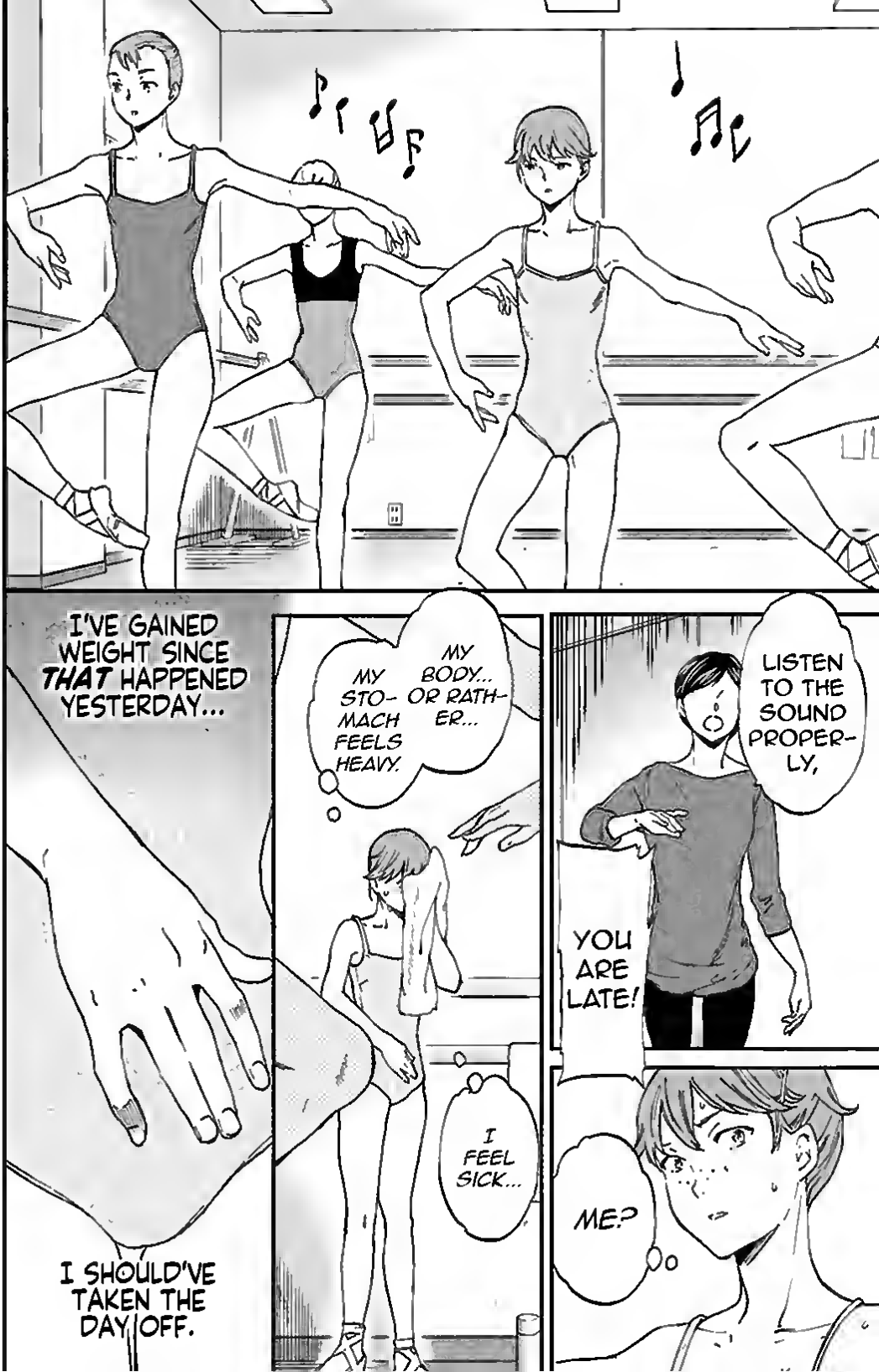
IS IT TOO HARD?
SHOULD WE GIVE UP, THEN?
YOU'RE WASTING TIME.
しゅん

SINK YOUR TEETH INTO IT.
LIKE THAT.
YES.
I'LL BE THERE FOR YOU.
NEVER TRULY EXTEND-ING MY ARM, BUT NEVER KEEPING MY EYES OFF OF YOU, EITHER.

I WOULD WITNESS YOUR GETTING UP ON YOUR OWN,
SO THAT WHEN-EVER YOU FALL,
HOW-EVER MANY TIMES,
FOR THE TIME IS COM-ING
WHEN I WILL NO LONGER BE ABLE TO SET MY EYES ON YOU,
AND YOU WILL NEED TO BE ABLE TO STAND UP ON YOUR OWN MORE THAN EVER BEFORE.
PLEASE LET ME BELIEVE,
SHOW ME ONE LAST TIME...

THE BRONZE MEDAL GOES TO ZHANG MEI!
MY DEAR DAUGH-TER,
HOW SPECIAL YOU ARE.
THE SILVER MEDAL GOES TO ANDREA MENDOZA!
AND THE GOLD MEDAL
GOES TO—


LET ME BELIEVE THAT YOU ARE DIFFERENT FROM THE WEAK CHILDREN
WHO DROPPED OUT ON ME.


I'VE GAINED WEIGHT SINCE *THAT* HAPPENED YESTERDAY...
I SHOULD'VE TAKEN THE DAY OFF.
MY STO-MACH FEELS HEAVY.
MY BODY... OR RATH-ER...
I FEEL SICK...
LISTEN TO THE SOUND PROPER-LY,
YOU ARE LATE!
ME?

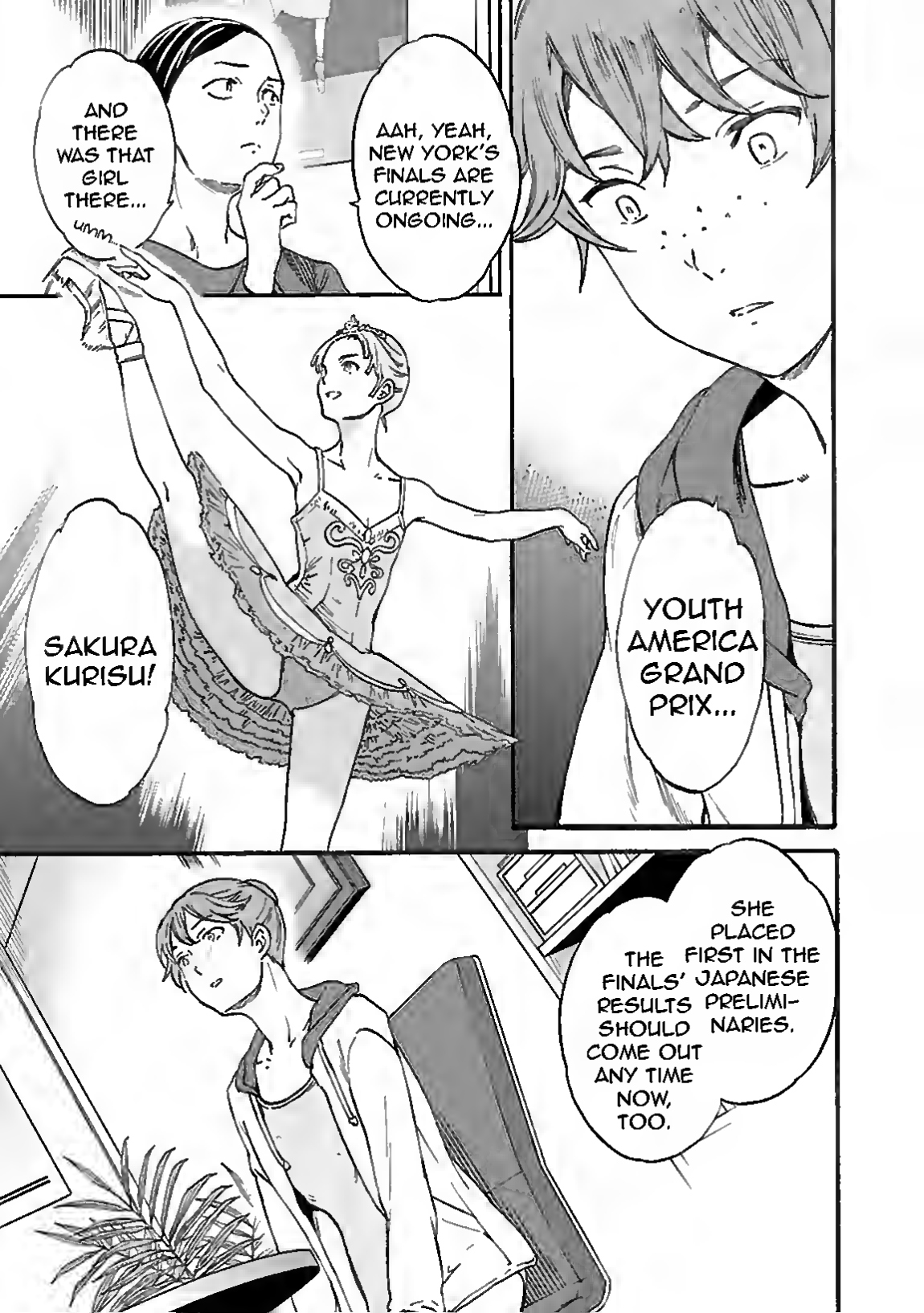
NO DANCER SHOULD EVER DO THAT MUCH NOISE WHEN LANDING A JETÉ!
PULL YOUR BODY UP UNTIL THE VERY END!
EMA-CHAN, CAN YOU COME HERE?

YOU HAVE A BAD HABIT OF LETTING YOUR MIND WANDER WHEN YOU'RE PRACTICING,
I'VE BEEN WORRIED ABOUT YOUR SITUATION FOR A WHILE NOW,
AND YOUR ATTITUDE DOESN'T IMPROVE, WHICH IS WHY YOU ARE HERE NOW.
WHICH ONLY MAKES YOU APPEAR NEGLIGENT.
BUT YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO DANCE BALLET LIKE THIS.
NOW, I DO NOT MEAN THIS AS A THREAT,

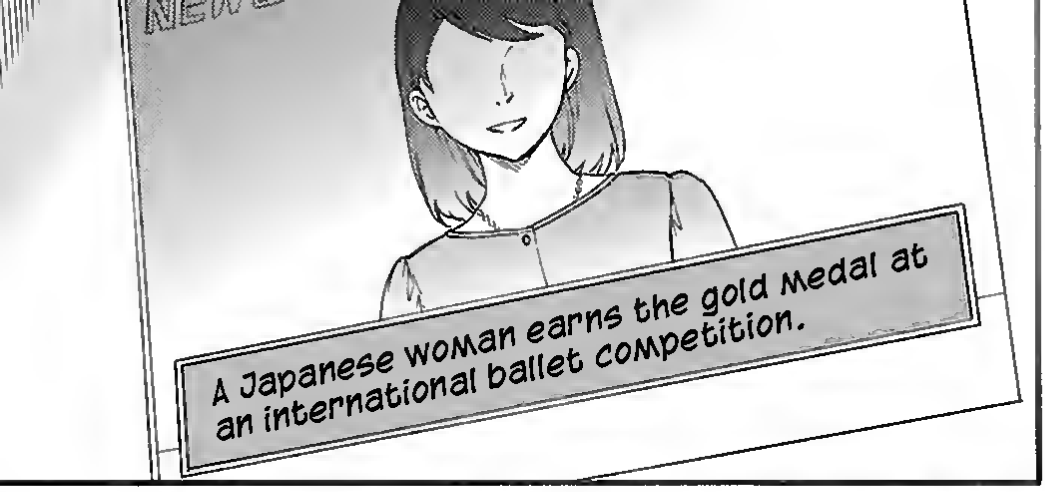
I'VE NEVER LIKED LESSONS.
REPEATING THE SAME MOVEMENTS OVER AND OVER AGAIN
IS JUST A PAIN.
BUT, TO BE HONEST,
...
YOUR BODY IS CURRENTLY UNDERGOING RAPID GROWTH,
YOU CAN'T TRAIN HALF-ASSEDLY AND EXPECT TO BE ABLE TO KEEP UP WITH IT.
...
DO YOU NOT LIKE BALLET ANYMORE?
!
NO!
THAT'S NOT WHAT IT'S ABOUT!

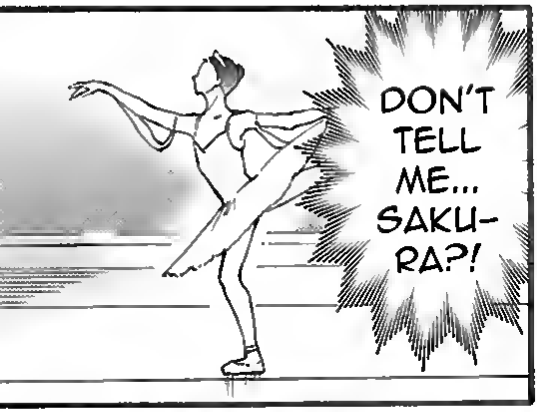
DO YOU THINK THAT YOUR FEELINGS MAY CHANGE WERE YOU GIVEN A GOAL, LIKE, SAY, A COMPE-TITION...?
WORLD'S LARGEST STUDEN
BALLET COMPETITION
YOUR TEACHERS ALSO WISH THE BEST FOR YOU.
YOU CAN'T JUST UNDER-STAND AND LET IT GO...
THEY MAY BE DIFFI-CULT, BUT YOU CAN'T JUST SHOW UP FOR RECITALS, EITHER.
I UNDER-STAND... I KNOW YOU ARE RIGHT.

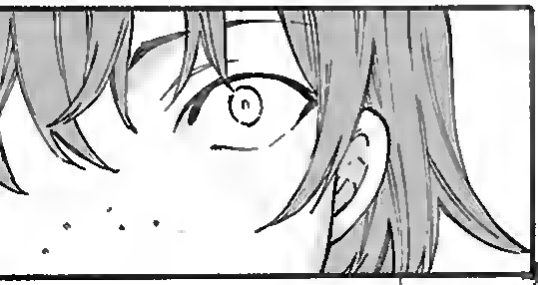
COMPE-TITION...

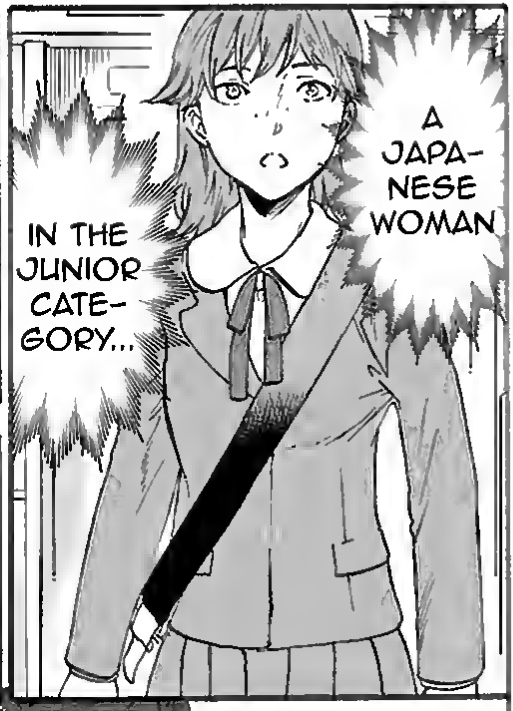

AND THERE WAS THAT GIRL THERE...
umm...
AAH, YEAH, NEW YORK'S FINALS ARE CURRENTLY ONGOING...
SAKURA KURISU!
YOUTH AMERICA GRAND PRIX...
SHE PLACED FIRST IN THE JAPANESE PRELIMINARIES.
THE FINALS' RESULTS SHOULD COME OUT ANY TIME NOW, TOO.

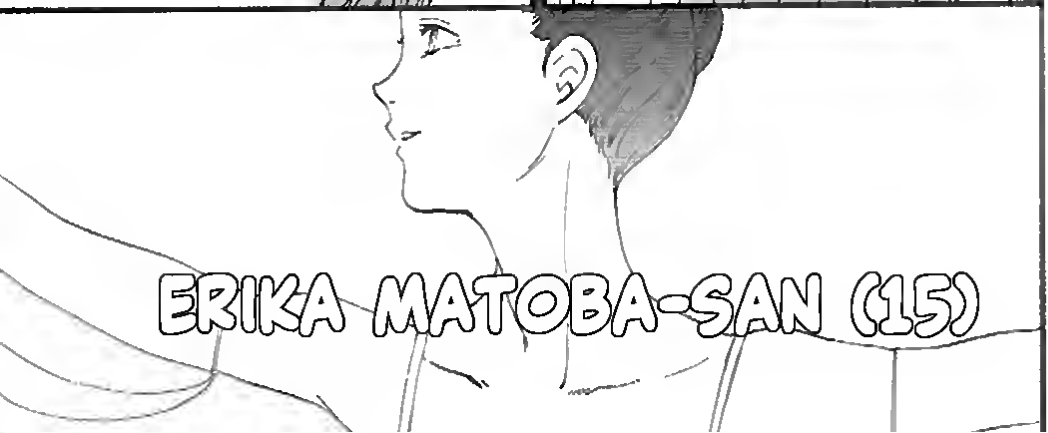
SAKURA AND KANADE,
AND PROBABLY SHOUKO, TOO,
THEY'RE ALL GOING TO LEAVE ME BEHIND.
IT'S TRUE THAT I CAN'T KEEP GOING ON LIKE THAT...
BUT I HAVE TO DO IT PROPERLY
IF I WANT TO STAND ON STAGE... DON'T I?
IT'S PAINFUL AND TROUBLESOME,
AND I ONLY HAVE BAD MEMORIES ABOUT IT,
I THINK THAT PRACTICING IS ALSO A TALENT.

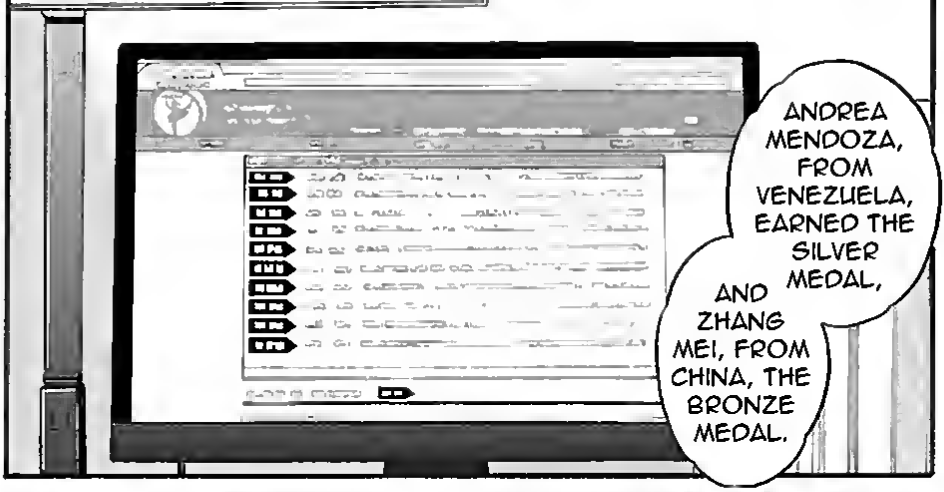

A Japanese woman earns the gold medal at an international ballet competition.


DON'T TELL ME... SAKU-RA?!



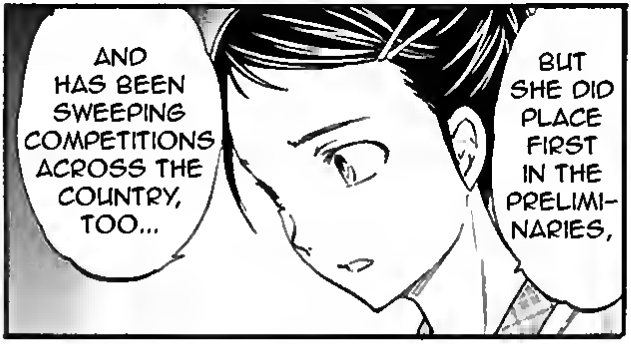

A JAPA-NESE WOMAN
IN THE JUNIOR CATE-GORY...


ERIKA MATOBA-SAN (15)

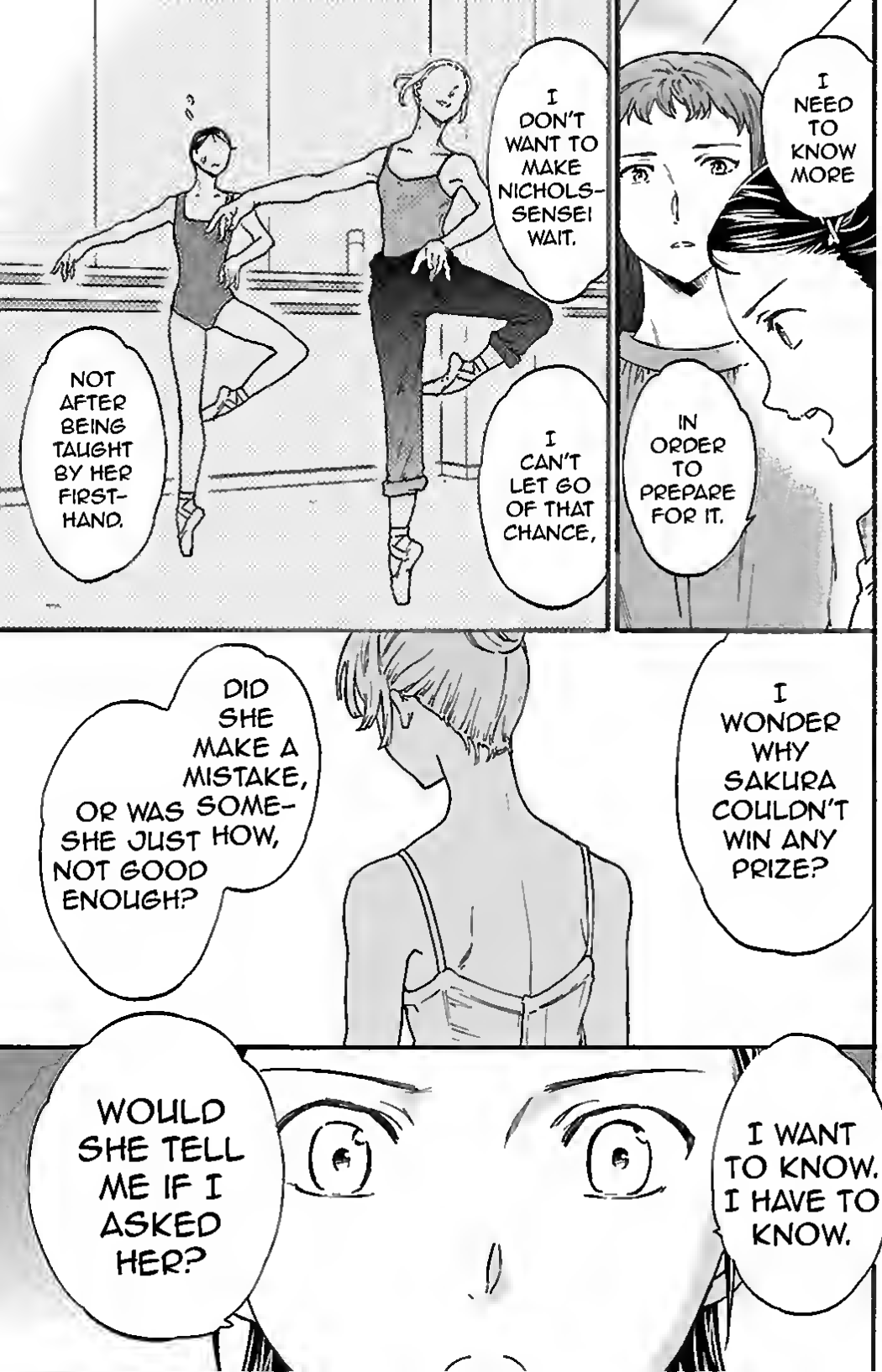

ANDREA MENDOZA, FROM VENEZUELA, EARNED THE SILVER MEDAL,
AND ZHANG MEI, FROM CHINA, THE BRONZE MEDAL.

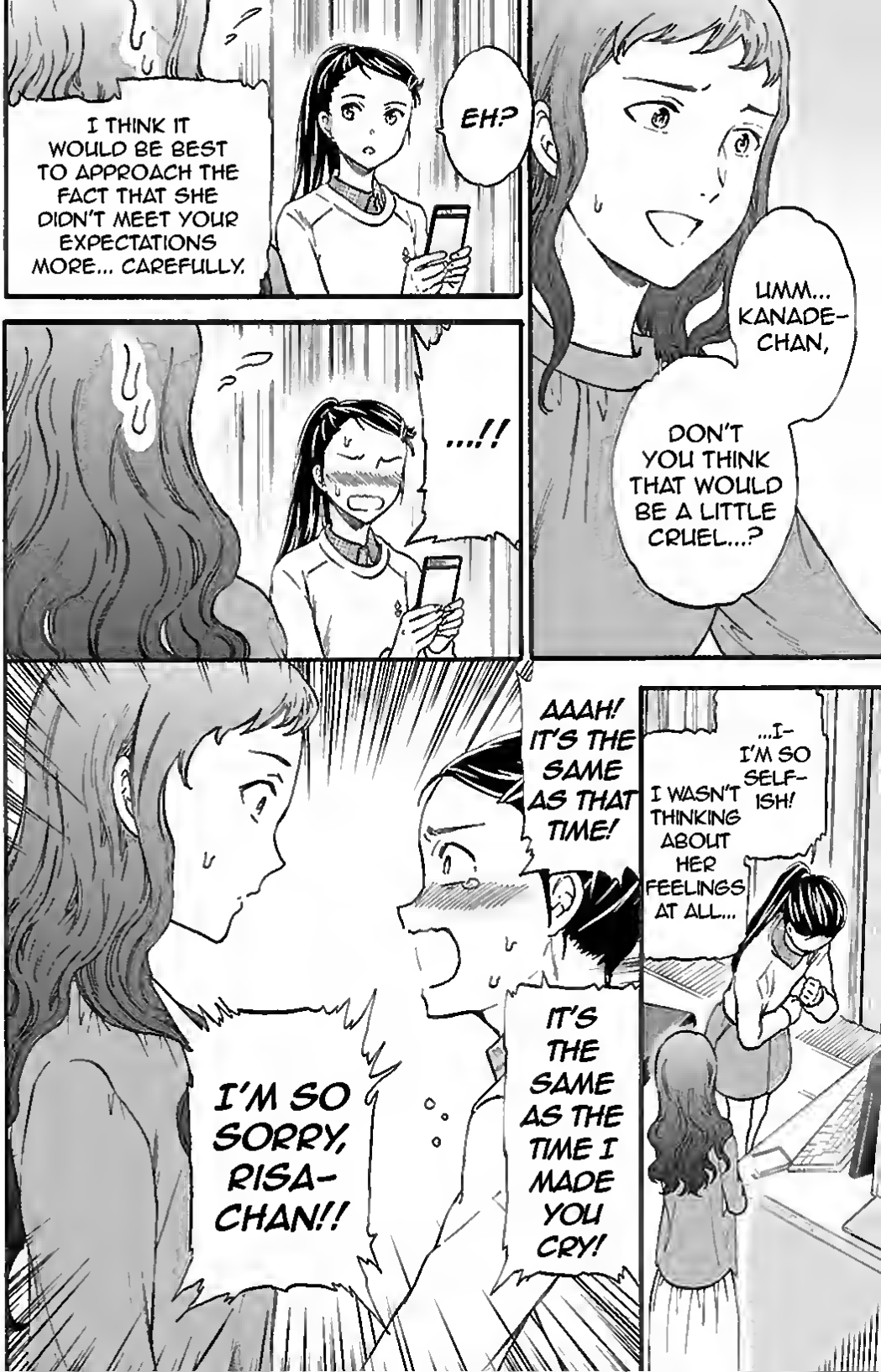
AS EXPECTED, SHE'S AT A DISAD-VANTAGE AGAINST 15 YEARS OLDS.
SHE'S GOOD, BUT SHE'S STILL 12 YEARS OLD,

SAKURA DIDN'T EARN A PRIZE!


AND HAS BEEN SWEEPING COMPETITIONS ACROSS THE COUNTRY, TOO...
BUT SHE DID PLACE FIRST IN THE PRELIMI-NARIES,

I CAN'T IMAGINE MYSELF STANDING A CHANCE AS I AM RIGHT NOW IF EVEN SAKURA WASN'T GOOD ENOUGH.
I ONLY WATCHED HALF OF THE FIRST ROUND, BUT EVERYONE LOOKED IMPRESSIVE.

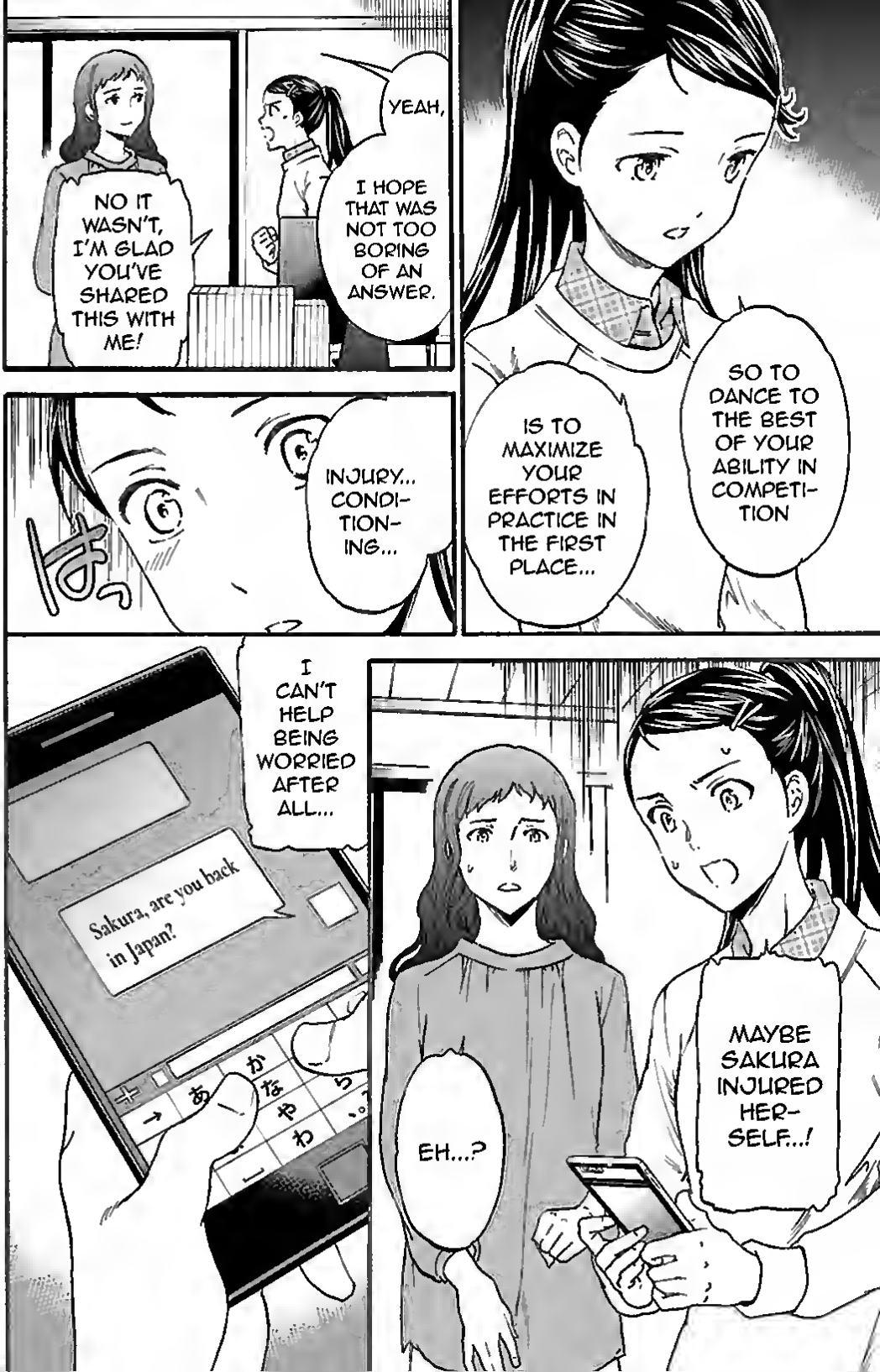

I NEED TO KNOW MORE
IN ORDER TO PREPARE FOR IT.
I DON'T WANT TO MAKE NICHOLS-SENSEI WAIT.
I CAN'T LET GO OF THAT CHANCE,
NOT AFTER BEING TAUGHT BY HER FIRST-HAND.
I WONDER WHY SAKURA COULDN'T WIN ANY PRIZE?
DID SHE MAKE A MISTAKE, OR WAS SOME- SHE JUST HOW, NOT GOOD ENOUGH?
I WANT TO KNOW. I HAVE TO KNOW.
WOULD SHE TELL ME IF I ASKED HER?


I THINK IT WOULD BE BEST TO APPROACH THE FACT THAT SHE DIDN'T MEET YOUR EXPECTATIONS MORE... CAREFULLY.
EH?
UMM... KANADE-CHAN,
DON'T YOU THINK THAT WOULD BE A LITTLE CRUEL...?
...!!
...I- I'M SO SELF-ISH!
I WASN'T THINKING ABOUT HER FEELINGS AT ALL...
AAAH! IT'S THE SAME AS THAT TIME!
IT'S THE SAME AS THE TIME I MADE YOU CRY!
I'M SO SORRY, RISA-CHAN!!

AH!
I DIDN'T MEAN IT THAT WAY!
WHAT HAPPENED THAT TIME... YOU KNOW,
WHEN LIL' KANADE-CHAN HIT A BULL'S-EYES, I'D SAY I WAS KIND OF HURT AND UPSET.
UPSET?!
BUT THANKS TO YOU, I WAS ABLE TO QUIT WITHOUT ANY REGRET.
I MADE YOU QUIT?!
THAT WAS JUST MY OWN EXPERIENCE, ...
IT MAY NOT APPLY TO YOUR FRIEND WHO YOU SAY IS REALLY GOOD.
SO A CAREFUL APPROACH,
SHOULD I WAIT FOR HER TO CONTACT ME...?
DON'T BLAME YOURSELF!!
really
I don't think Sakura would quit over that, but if there's even a small chance...

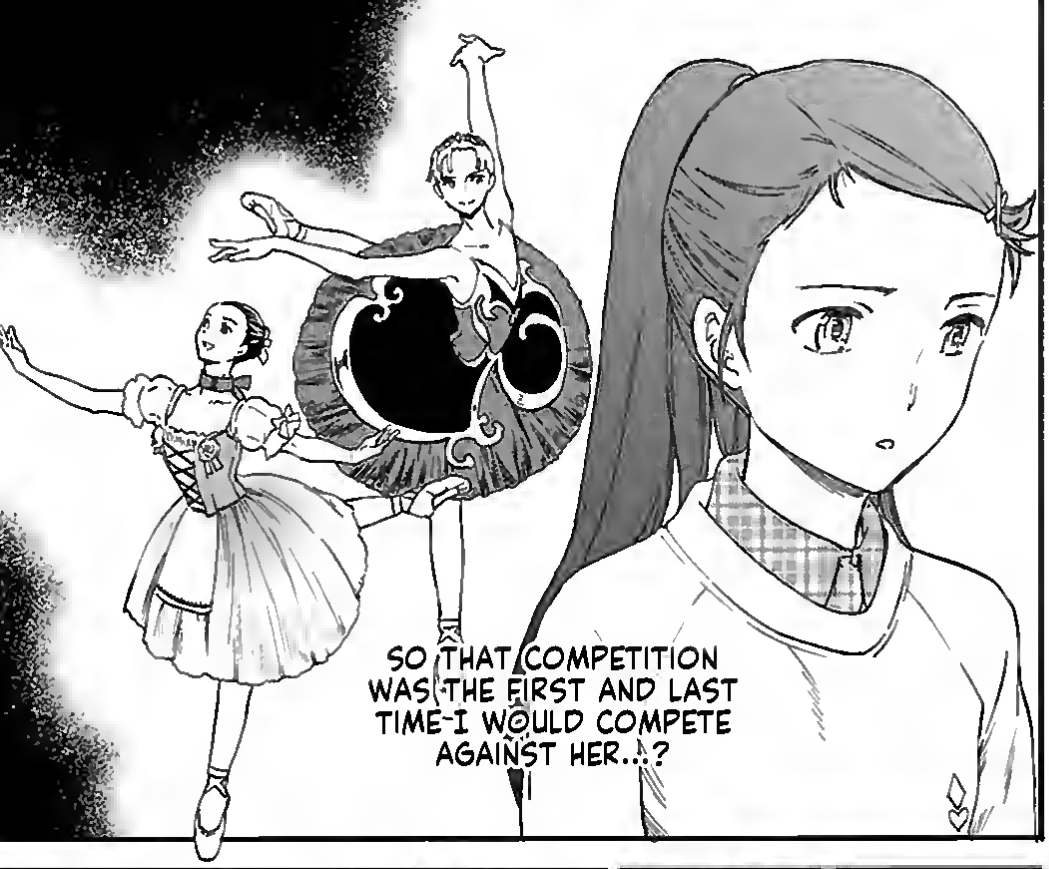
IF IT CAN HELP YOU IN ANY WAY...
DO YOU WANT TO KNOW THE REASON WHY I FAILED THAT COMPETI-TION?
YES, I DO.
QUITE SIMPLY, MY CONDI-TIONING WAS TER-RIBLE.

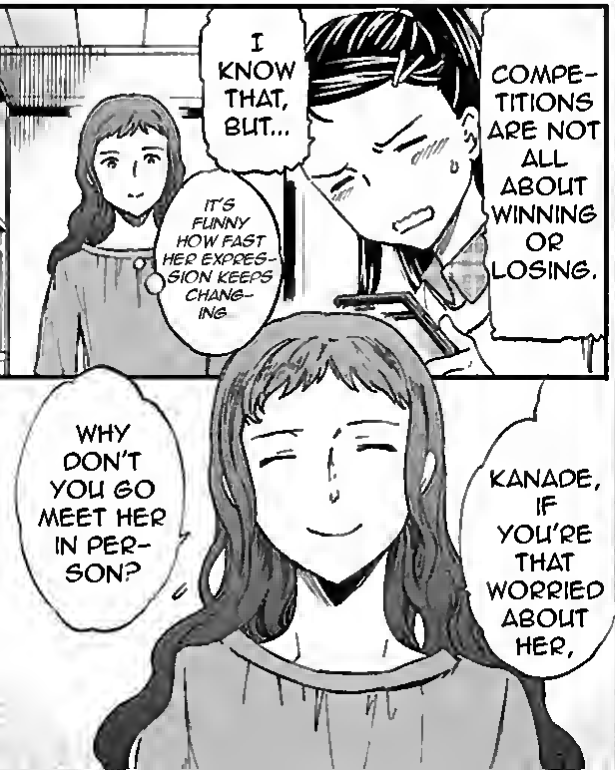
AND THEN THE WORST HAPPENED
WHILE I WAS TRYING TO COVER FOR AN INJURY.
AND WHILE I WAS WORRYING ABOUT IT,
I NEGLECTED MY ACTING ALTOGETHER.
THERE WAS NO WAY MOVEMENTS I'D NEVER PRACTICED
WOULD TURN OUT AS I EXPECTED THEM TO.


NO IT WASN'T, I'M GLAD YOU'VE SHARED THIS WITH ME!
YEAH, I HOPE THAT WAS NOT TOO BORING OF AN ANSWER.
SO TO DANCE TO THE BEST OF YOUR ABILITY IN COMPETITION
IS TO MAXIMIZE YOUR EFFORTS IN PRACTICE IN THE FIRST PLACE...
INJURY... CONDITIONING...
はっ
I CAN'T HELP BEING WORRIED AFTER ALL...
Sakura, are you back in Japan?
EH...?
MAYBE SAKURA INJURED HERSELF...!

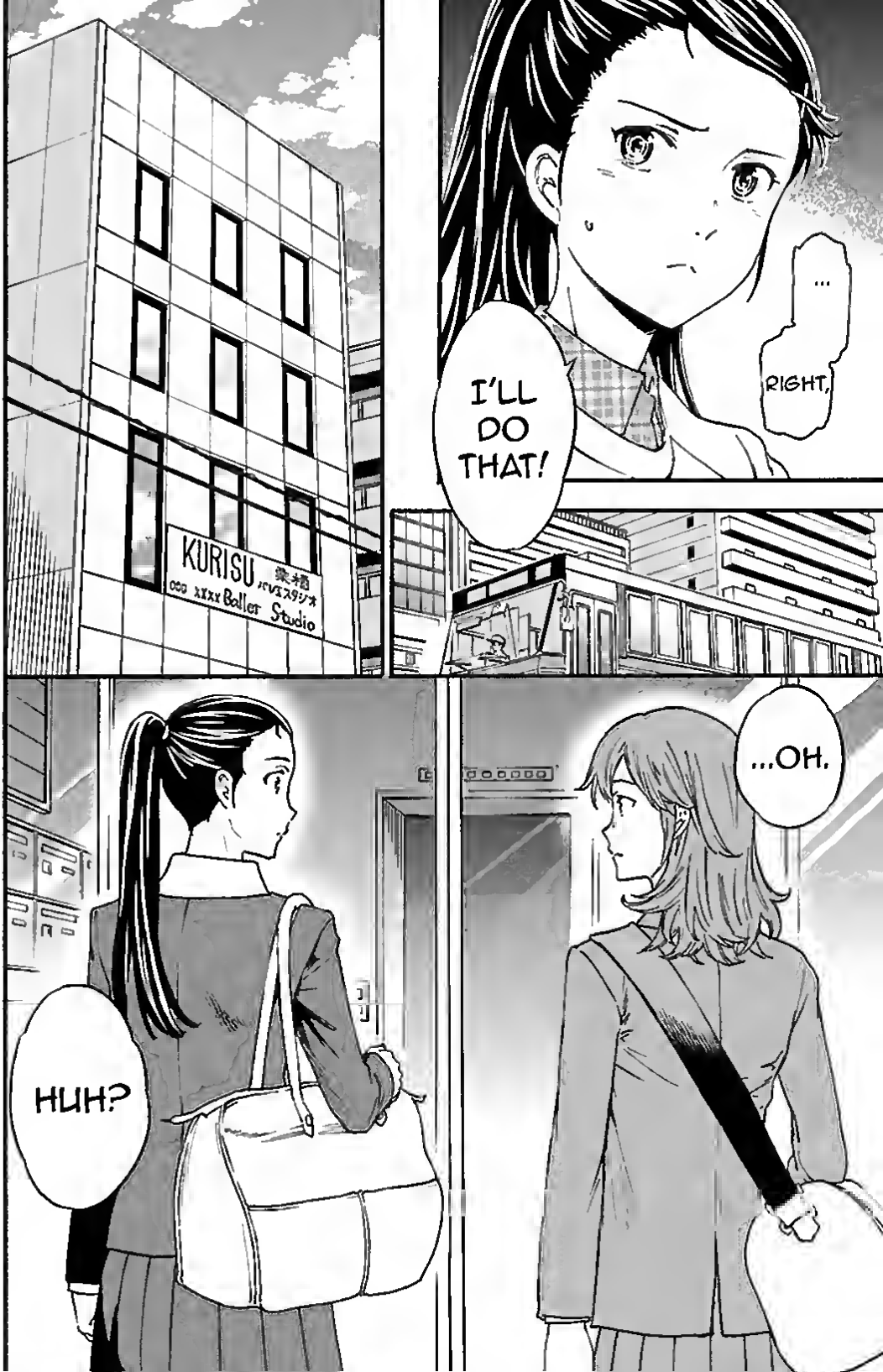
"I'LL BE COMING TO YAGP NEXT YEAR, TOO."
"ARE YOU ALRIGHT? TIRED MAYBE?"
"NOT GOING"
...EH?
OH! SHE REPLIED ALREADY!
BZZZ
send
HOW ABOUT THAT?
I'm not going to the next one.
I'm done.

YOU WERE RIGHT, RISA-CHAN!! I SHOULD HAVE BEEN MORE CAREFUL!!
DONE...?
SAKURA SAID SHE'S DONE WITH BALLET! WHAT DO I DO?!
CALM DOWN, KANA-DE,
I THINK SHE'S JUST TALKING ABOUT THE COMPE-TITION.
AH...
BUT SHE DIDN'T WIN ANY PRIZE...
DOES THAT MEAN SHE HAS NO NEED TO STUDY ABROAD ANYMORE?
DONE WITH COM-PETI-TIONS...
I HOPE THAT'S THE CASE...


SO THAT COMPETITION WAS THE FIRST AND LAST TIME I WOULD COMPETE AGAINST HER...?


I KNOW THAT, BUT...
IT'S FUNNY HOW FAST HER EXPRESSION KEEPS CHANGING
COMPETITIONS ARE NOT ALL ABOUT WINNING OR LOSING.
WHY DON'T YOU GO MEET HER IN PERSON?
KANADE, IF YOU'RE THAT WORRIED ABOUT HER,

SHE QUIT WHILE SHE WAS AHEAD OF ME...!


KURISU
栗栖
バレエスタジオ
ooo xxxx Ballet Studio
I'LL DO THAT!
RIGHT,
...
...OH.
HUH?

WHAT A COINCIDENCE, EMA-CHAN, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
ERR, YOU SEE...
I THOUGHT I'D CHECK OUT THIS CLASS AIMED AT MIDDLE SCHOOLERS.
I HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE JUST TAKING A LOOK, RIGHT?
OH YEAH, YOU WERE ORIGINALLY TRAINING HERE, TOO.
YEAH, ARE YOU HERE FOR THE SAME THING?
NO, I CAME HERE TO SEE SAKURA,
I FIGURED SHE WOULD BE HERE RIGHT NOW.
B1 1 2 3 4 5 6
...EMA-CHAN?
...
TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, THAT'S THE REASON I'M HERE, TOO.
I WAS WONDERING WHAT HAPPENED AT YAGP.

tap!
THE PRELIMINARIES ARE GETTING CLOSE,
WE'RE ONLY SIX MONTHS AWAY.
I SEE!
YEAH.
OH!
WERE YOU THINKING ABOUT PARTICIPATING AS WELL?!
THEY REALLY ARE...
OH!

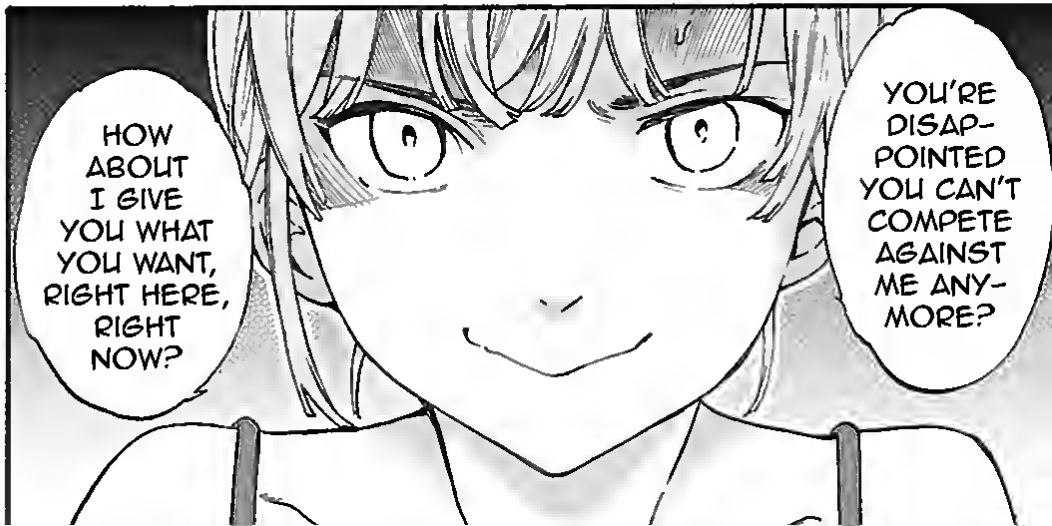
KANA.
I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU DON'T SEEM INJURED!
HUH?
AND EMA-CHAN, TOO...
WHAT ARE YOU HERE FOR?

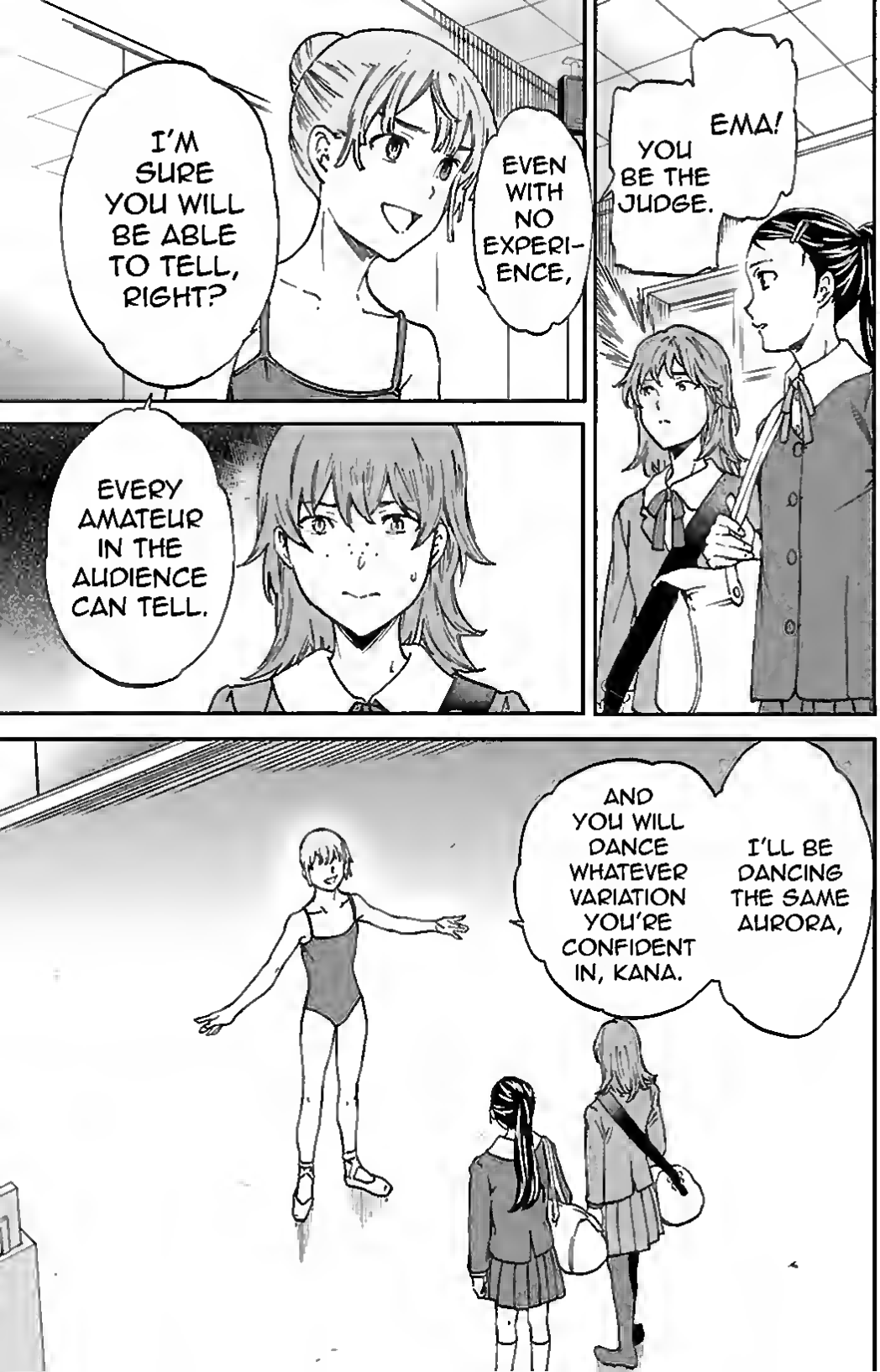
I WAS WORRIED ABOUT YOU.
I MEAN, I THOUGHT THAT MAYBE YOUR CONDITIONING WAS NOT GOOD ENOUGH, OR SOMETHING...
HUH...
YEAH.
EVEN EMA-CHAN WAS WORRIED, RIGHT?

I'M DISAPPOINTED THAT I WON'T BE ABLE TO COMPETE AGAINST YOU ANYMORE.
AND NOW YOU SAID YOU'RE NOT GOING TO YAGP ANYMORE,
HA HA HA HA.

THE TWO OF YOU, WORRIED ABOUT ME?
TRYING TO SYMPATHIZE WITH ME?
THIS IS LAUGHABLE. HAVE I REALLY FALLEN THIS LOW?
EH, WHAT?
WAIT, THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT,
I'M NOT TRYING TO SYMPATHIZE...
GIVE ME A BREAK!

DO YOU REALLY THINK I WOULD LOSE TO YOU IN A SOLO?


HOW ABOUT I GIVE YOU WHAT YOU WANT, RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW?
YOU'RE DISAP-POINTED YOU CAN'T COMPETE AGAINST ME ANY-MORE?


I'M SURE YOU WILL BE ABLE TO TELL, RIGHT?
EVEN WITH NO EXPERI-ENCE,
EMA! YOU BE THE JUDGE.
EVERY AMATEUR IN THE AUDIENCE CAN TELL.
I'LL BE DANCING THE SAME AURORA,
AND YOU WILL DANCE WHATEVER VARIATION YOU'RE CONFIDENT IN, KANA.

LET'S DO THIS.
AL-RIGHT,
I'LL WAIT UNTIL YOU'VE WARMED UP.
THAT'S YOUR BALLET GEAR, RIGHT?
I'LL DANCE AURORA, TOO.

絢爛たるグランドセーヌ

La Magnifique Grande Scène.
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